

**Forum:** General Assembly 2 (Economic and Financial)

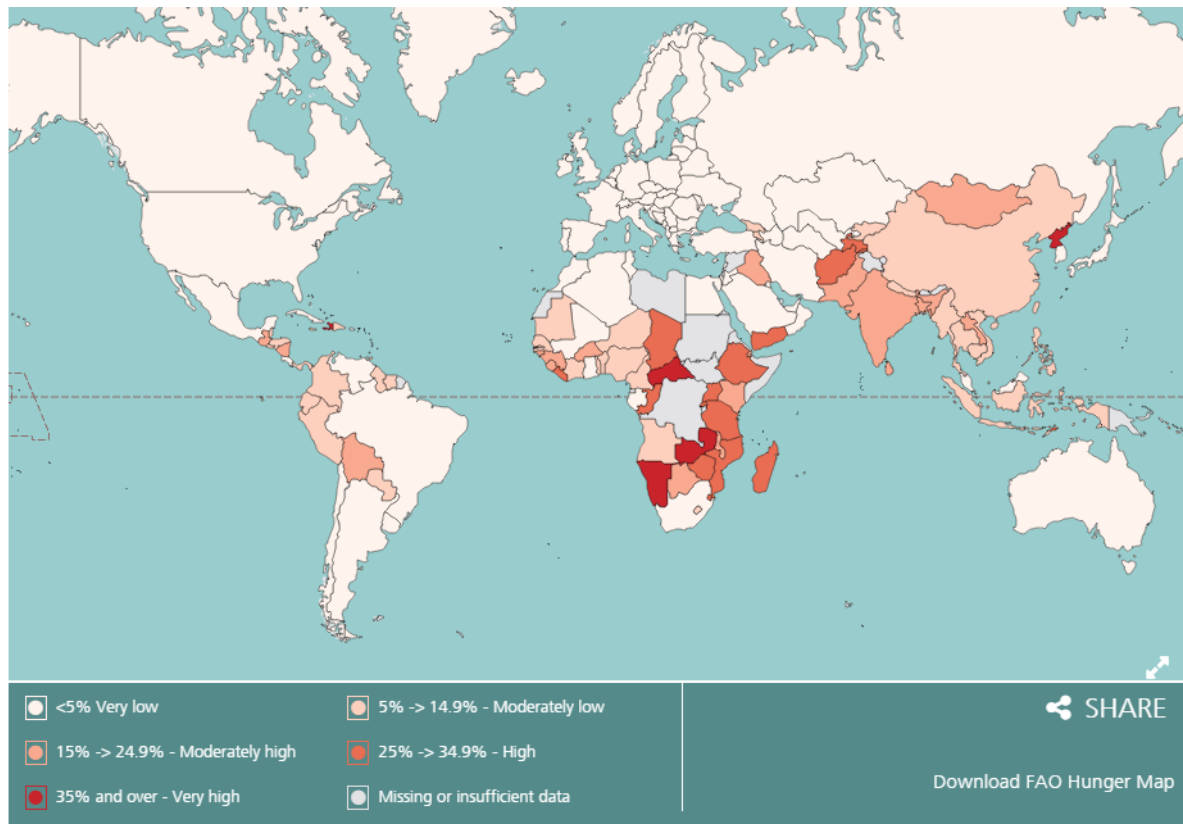
**Issue:** The question of development of agricultural methods, in the context of food security and world hunger

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## Introduction



**Caption # 1:** The world map showing the world hunger, undernourishment rate of each country in the world (2015; Source: UN FAO, <http://www.fao.org/hunger/en/>)

The problems regarding to world hunger and food security are the major concerns that the world is facing today. In fact, hunger and malnutrition are the number one risk worldwide, greater than other infectious diseases. Natural disasters, conflicts, low agriculture productivity, poverty, economic crisis are all the factors that lead to the problem of food insecurity and hunger.

As the world population grows, much more effort had to be put in to increase the sustainability of agriculture. However, in Less Economically Developed Countries (LEDCs) the agricultural efficiencies are too low and have to be increased to approximately 1.8% to 3% per year to just feed the country's population. Moreover, in More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs) the agricultural productivity is effective due to technological methods that lead to having a secure food source and a low proportion of people being in the state of hunger. Therefore, it is very important to note the differences in agricultural methods between nations and the influences that are reflected by it.

Currently, the problem associating with improvement of agricultural methods in context of food security and world hunger is one of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) stating: "End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture." This goal doesn't just improve the conditions of hunger or food security but also relates to improving other goals within the 17 SDGs like empowering small farmers, promoting gender equality, ending poverty. The first MDG was within reach, but there were large differences between developing regions. East Asia, South-East Asia, Latin America have achieved the MDG target however, in sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, West Asia there were lack of progress to achieve the target. Through debates within the United Nations conferences, it is said that this problem is solvable and could see the end in this generation which means that every individuals in the nation must be the leaders of solving this issue.

## **Definition of Key Terms**

### **Agriculture**

The science, art and business of cultivating soil, producing crops, and raising livestock; farming

### **Hunger**

(Noun) the painful sensation or state of weakness caused by the need of food

### **Malnutrition**

(Noun) inadequate or unbalanced nutrition, caused by not having enough food to eat, or not eating foods in correct proportions or having a balanced diet with eating too much of the nutrients

## **Food security**

(Noun) the state of having reliable access to a sufficient quantity of affordable, nutritious food

## **Food insecurity**

(Noun) the state of having a lack of secure access to sufficient amounts of safe and nutritious food for normal growth and development and an active and healthy life

## **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)**

An organization whose goal is eradicating hunger, achieving food security for everyone in the world, and eliminating rural poverty

<http://www.fao.org/about/what-we-do/en/>

## **The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)**

A specialized agency of the United Nations that was established in 1977 after the world food conference in 1974 to combat rural hunger and poverty in developing countries through low-interest loans and direct assistance. Also, they give financial aids to agricultural development projects for food production in developing countries.

<http://www.ifad.org/governance/index.htm>

## **United Nations World Food Programme (WFP)**

The WFP is the largest humanitarian agency fighting against hunger worldwide that is funded by the United Nations. They work together with other agencies like the FAO and the IFAD to achieve the four main objectives:

1. Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies;
2. Support food security and nutrition and rebuild livelihoods in fragile settings and following emergencies;
3. Reduce risk and enable people communities and countries to meet their own food and nutrition needs;
4. Reduce undernutrition and break the intergenerational cycle of hunger

<http://www.wfp.org/about/>

## Millennium Development Goals (MDGs)

The Millennium Development Goals are set up by the United Nations to achieve until 2015; where the goals range from halving extreme poverty to halting the spread of HIV/AIDS. The first MDG relates to eradicating extreme poverty and hunger which directly helps the boost of food production.

<http://www.un.org/millenniumgoals/bkqd.shtml>

## Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)

The Sustainable Development Goals are an intergovernmental set of aspiration goals with 17 goals and 169 targets. The second SDG states: “End hunger, achieve food security and improved nutrition and promote sustainable agriculture” which directly links to the question.

## Background Information

As the world population is growing, more effort on producing food and improving agricultural methods must be putted in to feed the world's population. For the past few decades, the United Nations have payed particular attention in order to reduce the number of people under malnutrition or to eradicate hunger and poverty. The first MDG had to be accomplished by 2015, however, due to environmental issues like climate changes disturbing the productivity of agriculture; the goal had to be extended to be one of the SDGs. Poverty and hunger are rural problems, that smallholder farmers and their families make up a part of being poor and hunger. The lack of food production from farmers contributes greatly into extreme hunger and poverty; therefore, eradicating poverty and hunger are linked directly to boost up food productivity and rural incomes.

Over the past 50 years, the world's cultivated land areas have increased to 12 percent where the agricultural production has been tripled. There has been a great expansion in forests between 2000 and 2013 where 13 million hectares were lost. However, forests are very vital in sustainable agriculture where they help protect the soil; due to deforestation the world's productivity is slowing because of the lands being degraded. The degradation of the land: soils, freshwaters, oceans, and forests increase the likelihood of having natural disasters causing many men and women to migrate to other areas to look for land. In order to solve the problem, the United Nations Secretary-General initiated **The Zero Hunger Challenge** in 2012, inviting all

nations to be participating to make sure that there is no one who is in hunger in the future. There are five objectives to this challenge:

1. 100% access to adequate food all year round
2. Zero stunted children under 2 years, no more malnutrition in pregnancy and early childhood
3. All food systems are sustainable
4. 100% growth in smallholder productivity and income, particularly for women
5. Zero loss or waste of food, including responsible consumption

Over 30 more countries are currently working on the Zero Hunger Challenge with the global organizations like the FAO, IFAD and WFP. Especial care and focus went on to make sure women farmers are able to adapt to the climate changes conditions to make sure their food sources are secure and they obtain the correct nutrients.

<http://www.un.org/en/sustainablefuture/food.asp#overview>

**The Committee on World Food Security (CFS)** is an intergovernmental body that focuses on agriculture, food security and nutrition. They are responsible in investing in agriculture and food systems to improve food security. In October 2013, the committee recommended one improving food security regarding to the development of biofuels and also proposed to invest in smallholder agriculture where the farmers had decent work to do during that period. The CFS advised developing countries to monitor on their development, implementation and evaluate on their own plans to eliminate hunger and poverty or their attitudes towards achieving food security and nutrition. Through CFS the global food system has been greatly enhanced and helped achieve the World Food Summit (WFS).

[www.fao.org/cfs](http://www.fao.org/cfs)

## Key Issues

### World Hunger

Over 795 million people are in hunger today. One ninth of the population doesn't have access to sufficient food sources and have a healthy lifestyle. The world is now preceding hunger projects in order to help people to move out from chronic hunger and increase farm

production by supporting with tools. The Zero Hunger Challenge is one of the ways the United Nations is trying to accomplish the second goal of the Sustainable Development Goal. As there are more natural disasters in areas that are desperate in need of food, it is very difficult for farmers to even grow crops for their own benefits. When there is a lack of food in a region then there are more people being undernourished which increases the world hunger rate.

## **World Population Growth**

As the world population increases, the demand for food increases. Therefore, to satisfy the high demand there must be an increase in supply. This cause can lead to food prices being unstable because the food production cannot match the high demand. According to the FAO, if the world population reaches to around 9.1 billion by 2050 then the world food production needs to rise by 70%. The 70% increase will fortunately be able to overcome the rise of energy prices, prevent loss of agricultural land.

## **Food Insecurity**

People with low incomes are normally net consumers and they are the people who are affected the most when there are economic or food crisis. A sustainable agriculture is defined to be when the net consumers are able to afford food with right values of nutrients. In cities, where there are a lot of low income people then the absolute number of people with malnutrition will increase at a fast rate.

In 2015, the overall progress to achieve the first MDG was assessed by comparing different regions to see the difference in the reduction of hunger, malnourishment and also the prevalence of underweight children less than five years of age. Although, some progress has been made by some countries, there are other countries that haven't report their statistics where it was difficult to determine the progress.

## **Major Parties Involved and Their Views**

### **The World Food Program**

The WFP is one of the important organizations that help to promote food security. Their ultimate objective of food aid is to eradicate the need of food aid to gain food security. They mainly target on people who are poor; who are in crisis conditions or are in situations that are

unable to have the resources to obtain food. WFP was established in 1961 after the FAO conference in 1960 that debated on the issue of starting the food aid program. There are four objectives the WFP hopes to achieve:

1. "Save lives and protect livelihoods in emergencies"
2. "Support food security and nutrition and rebuild livelihoods in fragile settings and following emergencies."
3. "Reduce risk and enable people, communities and countries to meet their own food and nutrition needs."
4. "Reduce undernutrition and break the intergenerational cycle of hunger."

### **The International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)**

This organization was established to help the poor people living in rural areas. They think that in order for poverty to be eradicated, the rural poor people must have the ability to lead their own development to prevent them from being in the state of poverty or hunger. They have supported projects and programs that were done in areas around the world and target the poor rural people who really needed the help to survive. IFAD boosted the agricultural production in the developing world and they were able to make 450 million farmers to have better motivation to harvest crops and a higher income. The IFAD was executed to accomplish the MDGs especially concentrating on the first goal of halving the proportion of hungry people and poor people by 2015.

### **Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO)**

The FAO leads efforts to defeat hunger in both developed countries and developing countries. The FAO negotiates equally and debates about modernizing agriculture, forestry, fisheries to make sure there is enough nutrition available and also achieve food security. In 1996, the World Food Summit was organised by the FAO where governments gather around signing which achieved the goal of halving the number of people suffering from hunger.

### **Timeline of Relevant Resolutions**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Description of Event</b>
<b>16 October 1945</b>	The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations

(FAO) was created to solve the issue of hunger and malnutrition.

The **World Food Day** is celebrated every year on this date to celebrate the establishment of the FAO. From 1981, it started to have different themes to celebrate and the themes were mostly related to agriculture as this was the highlighted area that was needed focus.

- 1946**                    **The First World Food Survey** was done to have some knowledge on the situation within food problems. It surveyed across 70 countries which was around 90 percent of the population back then. The survey gave a good analysis on the situation of World Hunger which gave out some ideas on how to solve this issue.
- 1950**                    **The World Census for Agriculture** is a measurement to measure and compare figures on defining agriculture. Through this measurement it was easy to identify the statistics on how each country was developing with its agricultural sector by knowing the number and area of farms by size and number of livestock.
- 1963**                    **The World Food Programme** was born as well as the World Food Congress. The WFP worked with the FAO in concentrating to eradicate poverty and hunger. The World Food Congress aims to strengthen the ways food security and improve technology to secure the world's food sources.
- 1974**                    **The First World Food Conference** was held in Rome by the FAO due to the famine in Bangladesh that went on for two years. Governments enter this conference to solve and proclaim statements to help solve the world issue relating to food.
- 1994**                    The WFP adopted the Mission Statement for the first time for the United Nations.
- 1997**                    The FAO launches a TeleFood campaign to raise awareness on the problem of hunger to find a situation. It used concerts, celebrities and the power of media to help fight hunger. The money raised through this campaign was used to help farmers produce food for their families.
- 2000**                    The Millennium Development Goals were created so that the goals could be achieved by 2015.



**2015**

The sustainable development goals have been created during the conference where the deadline was until 2030. There are 17 goals and every goal relates either directly or indirectly with the same idea.

## **Evaluation of Previous Attempts to Solve the Issue**

### **Purchase for Progress**

WFP has launched a five year project called the Purchase for Progress (P4P). It was commenced in September 2008, where P4P supports smallholder farmers by giving opportunities to be part of the market place and be competitive. This project expanded across 20 countries in Africa, Asia and America and helped approximately 800,000 farmers to improve their agricultural methods, handling with harvests and also some finance. The project made a tremendous progress towards improving the conditions for smallholder farmers to get a better living condition.

### **Program for Food Security**

The Programme for Food Security was the most effective solution to solve hunger, undernourishment and poverty. There are 102 countries participating in the programme and the programmes are now being run inside the nation. To maximize the work the FAO is doing, they strongly encourages promoting the national ownership and local power in the countries. In order to prevent the use of pests and plant diseases to make sure the production is productive, they created an International Plant Protection Convention (IPPC) to maintain the crops.

## **Possible Solutions**

### **Increase support from NGOs and UNOs**

Non-Governmental Organizations and United Nations' Organizations currently play a huge role in eradicating food insecurity. Their financial helps through donations and their huge amount of investment in agricultural advancements are well-known in the global society. Increasing the support from NGOs and UNOs reduce poverty and famine, while increasing the food security. This also allows UN mediators to give less effort and focus on other issues since the problem of securing food is solved. Organizations such as United States' Agency for

International Development (USAID) or Food and Agricultural Organisation of the United Nations (FAO) are typical and main organizations involved in this context.

### **Raising awareness in MEDCs and informing the importance**

Raising awareness of the importance of food security and eradicating poverty in More Economically Developed Countries (MEDCs) is one of the key solutions to solve the issue as this would increase financing for poor countries. Advertising campaigns in MEDCs will be able to give an opportunity to the citizens in MEDCs to provide aid and help fund poor nations. Money raised by running these campaigns will be given to the UN agencies or other organizations to donate these funds to any member states that need help. Another popular policy is off-shore contract farming, where countries aid farmers to grow crops in another country by using its arable land and water. If these funds are received, nations with insecure food will not need to rely on import goods anymore; they will be able to grow crops and increase their domestic food production as well as economic statue of the country.

### **Improve technology**

Technology advancement is the most fundamental and necessary solution to eradicate food insecurity and world hunger. As the issue topic is developing new agricultural methods, investment in developing new technology is a crucial solution. Improving technology should aim at increase in productivity and should be ready to adapt to new changes and challenges emerging against food production. In order to stop crops dying out, there surely needs to be a development of crop varieties which uses inputs more efficiently and technology that helps crops to be resistant to droughts, floods and diseases which kill out the crops. There also needs to an improvement on communication technologies, providing farmers access to financial services, market information and biotechnology in order to improve the productivity of the crops and hence eradicating food insecurity.

### **Changes in policies**

Changing policies play a huge role in reshaping the country. They help the nations to come up with the most efficient and productive policies which are then able to help local communities to adapt to global agenda. A strong policy within the country enables countries to own and run their own development goals and programs. Policies within the country should not only allow itself to increase its productivity to reasonable amount but also help it not to rely just

on the import goods. More tools should be available in the country to ensure food and other commodities are accessible. It is important for a country to provide an adequate amount of food in a fast time; new policies or changes in policies need to take speedy delivery into consideration and ensure easily accessible infrastructure in order to do this.

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